Upwork Named to Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies of 2025

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Recognition highlights Upwork's AI-driven approach to delivering faster, smarter work outcomes for customers

PALO ALTO, Calif., March 18, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Upwork (NASDAQ: UPWK), the world's work marketplace, today announced that it has been recognized by *Fast Company* as one of the Most Innovative Companies of 2025 in the Human Resources category. The honor highlights Upwork's industry-defining approach to transforming how businesses and independent professionals achieve meaningful work outcomes—faster, smarter, and with greater agility—by combining human expertise with AI-powered tools.

"Being recognized by Fast Company as one of 2025's Most Innovative Companies is a testament to how Upwork is actively shaping and leading the AI-powered future of work," said Hayden Brown, president and CEO, Upwork. "We're building critical innovative products for the new work ecosystem in the AI age, bringing together the best of what humans and cutting-edge technology have to offer in achieving work outcomes."

Innovation that Delivers for Businesses and Professionals Alike

This recognition highlights Upwork's leadership in transforming how businesses find and engage with talent in the AI age. As companies seek more agile, skills-based hiring models, Upwork's AI-driven platform is unlocking faster hiring, more informed workforce decisions, and seamless collaboration.

At the center of this transformation is Uma ™, Upwork's Mindful AI, an intelligent work companion redefining how businesses and independent professionals collaborate—streamlining everything from matching and hiring to project management and delivery. Trained on millions of platform interactions, Uma empowers clients and freelancers to move from idea to execution faster than ever before, helping businesses drive results with speed and precision while enabling talent to focus on higher-value, impactful work.

For businesses, Upwork's AI-driven platform delivers:

- Accelerated hiring with AI-powered tools like the Job Post Generator, with more than 70% of new clients opting in; high-value jobs from new clients are now filling at an 8% higher rate since Uma's introduction.
- Smarter talent matching using AI algorithms trained on millions of highly relevant and varied platform interactions, enabling businesses to find the right high-quality freelancers faster and with greater accuracy.
- Enhanced candidate evaluation with AI-powered insights that help businesses quickly assess freelancer qualifications, ensuring they make informed hiring decisions with greater confidence.
- On-demand access to AI expertise, with freelancers in 250+ AI skills including model tuning, prompt engineering, and AI model integration.

For talent, Upwork's AI innovation unlocks:

- Increased productivity through Uma, an AI companion that helps freelancers work more efficiently by simplifying tasks like drafting proposals, coding, and content creation. Freelancers are using the tool to streamline their workflows, save time, and focus on higher-value work.
- AI-assisted proposal writing, allowing talent to craft stronger, more tailored proposals faster, helping them stand out and win more work.
- Higher earnings potential, with freelancers working on AI-related projects earning 44% more per hour than those working on non-AI projects in 2024.

For businesses, the demand for AI-driven expertise continues to grow. In 2024, Upwork saw a 60% year-over-year increase in gross services volume (GSV) from AI-related work alongside a 42% increase in clients engaging with AI projects on the platform. These milestones highlight the accelerating need for agile, tech-enabled solutions and highly skilled, AI-equipped talent in a rapidly evolving work landscape.

Creating Economic Opportunity at Scale

To date, the Upwork platform has facilitated over $20 billion in economic opportunity for independent talent across more than 180 countries, enabling businesses to scale faster while empowering professionals to access work that was once limited by geography and traditional hiring barriers.

"At Upwork, we're breaking down barriers that prevent businesses and professionals from each achieving their dreams," said Brown. "We're ensuring businesses can access the global pool of highly skilled talent they need faster and more affordably than ever, and that talented professionals can thrive working on their terms in a true meritocracy. This honor from Fast Company reflects the scale and importance of delivering on this vision for a better world of work."

About Upwork

Upwork is the world's largest work marketplace that connects businesses with highly skilled independent talent from across the globe. From entrepreneurs to Fortune 100 enterprises, companies rely on Upwork's trusted platform to tap into expert talent, leverage AI-powered work solutions, and drive meaningful business outcomes. With access to professionals spanning more than 10,000 skills across AI & machine learning, software development, sales & marketing, customer support, finance & accounting, and more, Upwork enables businesses of all sizes to scale, innovate, and build agile teams. Upwork's platform has facilitated more than $20 billion in economic opportunity for talent around the world. Learn more at upwork.com and follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X.

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